

Testimony before the Judiciary Committee
March 29, 2012
In opposition to SB 452 – An Act Concerning the Care and Treatment of Persons
with a Psychiatric Disability
Barbara Albert

Good Morning/Afternoon members of the Judiciary Committee, also everyone else.

My name is Barbara Albert, registered voter, taxpayer, and renter in Hartford. I advocate for human beings with mental illnesses, along with others from Keep the Promise Coalition, NAMI-CT, the Mental Health Association and several other advocacy groups that stand up for the rights of those of us who are not only multiply medically challenged, this also includes plural mental illnesses for human beings like me.

I do volunteer work when my multitude of illnesses allow. I used to be employable. For the last several years I've been on Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security Disability.

This is my testimony concerning raised bill 452, An Act Concerning the Care and Treatment of Persons with Psychiatric Disabilities.

I strongly oppose everything about this raised bill. Ten or eleven years ago was the last time I was psychiatrically hospitalized Involuntary Commitment. I learned a long time ago, that thoughts are thoughts; that I did not have to act on them. It was suggested to talk about them, so I would not act on them. I took the risk and talked with an outpatient caseworker whom I still believe is unqualified to have done what happened. I did not act on my suicidal or self-mutilating thoughts. I chose to clean my apartment—something active and positive. In the evening there was a knock at my door. Two people from the outpatient mental health place, two crisis management people, and I did not know at the time, two police officers waiting in the hall. Their choice already was decided. Nothing I said could have made a difference. Today, I am still extremely enraged about this. Thankfully, the people at the hospital knew I was not a danger to myself or others. I was discharged on day four or five of a fifteen day commitment paper.

Because of an unqualified person's decision, including a psychiatrist I never met or who never met me.

This raised bill is in violation of the Federal Medical Confidentiality Act, laws concerning any medical illness. Also, the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as the Mental Health Parity Act of 2000, by singling out human beings with mental health challenges,

I think the raised bill is just as inhuman as racial profiling. People like me have to cope with the dehumanizing stigma on a daily basis.

Please do not support this bill. Thank you for listening.

Barbara Albert